

## Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 AID-05 FDRE-00 HEW-06 DHA-02 SCA-01 SCSE-00

EB-07 IO-11 INT-05 /104 W

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P 081234Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3276

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 0381

DEPT PLS PASS TO MESA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN IN

SUBJECT: CHASNALA MINE DISASTER

REF: NEW DELHI 0269

1. INDIA'S JANUARY 8 PRESS COVERAGE OF THE CHASNALA MINE DISASTER HIGHLIGHTS COMMISSIONING OF SOVIET PUMPS AND GOVERNMENT RELIEF MEASURE BEING TAKEN.

2. THE HINDUSTAN TIMES REPORTS THE COMMISSIONING OF ONE OF THE FOUR SOVIET SUBMERSIBLE PUMPS ON JANUARY 7. IT APPARENTLY DEVELOPED TECHNICAL PROBLEMS BUT WAS PUT IN ORDER BY SOVIET, POLISH AND BCCL ENGINEERS ON THE SCENE. FOLLOWING BRIEF BREAKDOWN THE PUMP STARTED PUMPING AT THE RATE OF 1200 GALLONS PER MINUTE. THE SECOND HIGH CAPACITY SOVIET PUMPS IS EXPECTED TO BE PUT IN OPERATION TODAY TO BE FOLLOWED BY TWO MORE, 48 HOURS AFTER THE SECOND PUMP. AS OF WEDNESDAY EVENING (JANUARY 7) 45 MILLION GALLONS OF WATER HAD BEEN PUMPED OUT AND THE WATER LEVEL INSIDE THE MINE REDUCED BY 45 FEET.

3. THE INDIAN EXPRESS REPORTS "THE BATTLE TO DEWATER THE CHASNALA  
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MINE ENTERED A WINNING PHASE TODAY (JANUARY 7) WITH THE COMMISSION

ING OF ONE HIGH-POWERED RUSSIAN PUMP. ALTHOUGH COMMISSIONED 36 HOURS BEHIND SCHEDULE, THE INSTALLATION OF THE SOVIET PUMP BRIGHTENED THE HOPE OF AN EARLY DEWATERING OF THE MINE". THE SOVIET PUMP WAS EXPECTED TO HAVE A DISCHARGE CAPACITY OF 1350 GALLONS PER MINUTE, BUT WAS PUMPING AT 1200 GALLONS PER MINUTE FOLLOWING A BRIEF BREAKDOWN.

4. THE NATIONAL HERALD SAYS THE HIGH POWERED RUSSIAN PUMP COMMISSIONED ON JANUARY 7 HAS A CAPACITY OF 2300 TO 2400 GALLONS PER MINUTE.

5. ACCORDING TO THE TIMES OF INDIA DEWATERING OPERATIONS AT THE CHASNALA MINE WERE STEPPED WITH THE COMMISSIONING OF MORE PUMPS UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF NINE SOVIET AND FOUR POLISH EXPERTS. THE TIMES REPORTS "ACCORDING TO A PRESS NOTE ISSUED FROM RAJ BHAVAN IN THE EVENING, THE GOVERNOR WAS TOLD BY THE RESCUE AND RELIEF AUTHORITIES AT CHASNALA THAT BECAUSE OF LIMITED SPACE FOR OPERATION OF THE PUMPS, IT WILL TAKE ANOTHER WEEK OR SO FOR THE MINE TO BE COMPLETELY DEWATERED".

6. THE INDIAN PRESS REPORTS GOI ESTABLISHING A PANEL TO UNDERTAKE A FORMAL INQUIRY INTO THE CHASNALA COLLIERY ACCIDENT. MORE ARTICLES REGARDING ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY MEASURES IN MINES HAVE ALSO BEEN APPEARING IN THE PRESS.SAXBE

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